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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to identify, examine and suggest a set of broad principles effective in the development of 4-H club programs in the United States and Tennessee. Eighty principles of successful 4-H Club work gleaned from related literature were tested in terms of: their acceptance as principles by two panels of experts; panel agreement to the way in which they were stated; and their relative importance to successful 4-H club work as seen by panel members. A mail questionnaire with the listing of the 80 principles was sent to every member of the National Panel and the State Panel. It was found that the two panels were in complete agreement with the selection of 57 items as valid principles. Another 14 approved by the National Panel were not favored by the State Panel. Seven items approved by the State Panel were disapproved by the national authorities. The finally accepted 57 principles were suggested for use by county agents as they seek to develop effective 4-H Club work. (Author/CK)

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A Research Summary of a Graduate Study

SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES USEFUL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE 4-H CLUB WORK

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SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES USEFUL IN THE DEVELOPMENT

OF EFFECTIVE 4-H CLUB WORK

by

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March 1972*

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to identify, examine and suggest a set of broad principles effective in the development of 4-H Club programs in the United States and Tennessee. For study purposes, a principle was defined as a generalization that might serve as a guide to agents in developing effective 4-H Club work in a county or area. The term developing was here understood to refer to planning, executing and evaluating 4-H Club work under the headings of 4-H participation, organization, leadership, recognition and sponsorship. Eighty principles of successful 4-H Club work gleaned from related literature were tested in terms of: their acceptance as principles by two panels of experts; panel agreement to the way in which they were stated; and their relative importance to successful 4-H Club work as seen by panel members.

The two panels, one at the national level and the other at the Tennessee state level, were designated to react to these principles. The National Panel was made up of seven nationally recognized 4-H authorities

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and the State Panel consisted of ten Tennessee State 4-H Committee members (4-H agents) serving appointively for the year 1971-72. The National and State Panel members, in addition to their rich experience and expertise in youth work, were responsible for developing 4-H Club programs at the national, state and county Extension levels.

A mail questionnaire with the listing of the 80 principles gathered from literature was sent to each and every member of both panels. Their reactions were received during the fall of 1971. The criteria fixed for the final selection of principles were: (1) An item to be approved as a principle must have been accepted by more than one-half each of the two panels; (2) To be approved, the wording of the statement of a principle must have been approved by at least two-thirds of the respondents from each panel; and (3) An item to be approved must have been rated at least an average of "fairly important" by each panel. First, the principles selected by the national authorities were listed in rank order under the five planning headings of participation, organization, leadership, recognition and sponsorship. These principles were tested for approval by State Panel members to find their applicability at the Tennessee county level. Finally, 57 items mutually agreed upon by both panels were made more precise with the help of the Graduate Committee and accepted as bona fide principles useful in the development of effective 4-H Club work in the United States and Tennessee.

It was found that the two panels were in complete agreement with the selection of 57 (71 percent) of 80 items as valid principles. Another 14 items approved by the National Panel were not favored by the State Panel. Seven items approved by the State Panel were disapproved by the national

authorities. Only two items were not approved as principles by either group. The ratings of the two panels were discussed under the five generally-accepted 4-H Club program planning areas of participation, organization, leadership, recognition and sponsorship. The reactions of the panels in each of these categories are discussed below.

Seven participation principles were finally accepted out of a total of 12 items listed. Two items were disapproved by the National Panel and three by the State Panel. State Panel members disapproved three of the items accepted by the National Panel.

Twenty organizational principles were selected out of a total of 27 considered. Five items were not favored by the nationally recognized authorities and three were not approved by State 4-H Committee members. Of three items disapproved by the State Panel, one was rejected by both. The other two items were approved by the National Panel.

Fourteen leadership principles were selected from an initial list of 18 items considered. All 18 items were approved by the National Panel, but the State Panel failed to agree with four of them.

Eleven recognition principles were approved by both panels from a total of 15 items listed. Nationally recognized authorities did not agree with one; while Tennessee State 4-H Committee members disapproved three of those approved by the National Panel.

Five sponsorship principles were favored from among the eight outlined. Only one was disapproved by the National Panel, but three by the State Panel. One was rejected by both, the other two being disapproved by State 4-H agents only.

The finally accepted 57 principles of successful 4-H Club work were suggested for use by concerned county agents as they seek to develop effective 4-H Club work in their respective counties or areas.

RESEARCH SUMMARY*

I. INTRODUCTION

Prior to this study, no record of formal comprehensive efforts to identify and frame the broad principles contributing to the success of 4-H Club and other Extension-related youth work was found. For study purposes, a principle was defined as a generalization that might serve as a guide to agents in developing effective 4-H Club work in a county or area. The term developing was here understood to refer to planning, executing and evaluating 4-H Club work under the headings of 4-H participation, organization, leadership, recognition and sponsorship.

Purposes

This study was conducted with the overall purposes of recognizing some broad principles of successful 4-H Club work that might be gainfully used as a guide by county agents in developing effective 4-H Club work in Tennessee and the United States. In more specific terms, the objectives of the study were: (1) to identify, state and examine with the help of two panels (National and Tennessee State) of experts the generally-accepted principles of successful 4-H Club work related to the five 4-H Club commonly-used planning categories of participation, organization, leadership, recognition and sponsorship; and (2) to suggest an accepted set of principles

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of successful 4-H Club work that might serve as a guide to agents and others desiring to develo effective 4-H Club work in their county or area.

Research Methodology

Both the library method and panel of judges approaches were utilized. A set of principles found to be useful in conducting 4-H Club work in the United States was gleaned from available research studies, summaries, seminar reports, authoritative writings and personal interviews with county agents. The principles so identified were examined for their validity with the help of two designated panels of experts at the National and State levels through questionnaire mailings. The National Panel consisted of seven nationally recognized authorities; while the State Panel consisted of the ten 1971 Tennessee State 4-H Committee members (see Appendix). The reaction of national authorities to the principles was considered important because of their previous experience and expertise in 4-H Club work, as well as because of their position in the overall development and conduct of 4-H Club work in the nation.

The approval of a State Panel also was considered useful to test the practicability of applying such principles at county and club levels in a state where 4-H Club work is still organized in public schools. The State Panel members (ten Tennessee State 4-H Committee members who were County-level 4-H agents) by virtue of their positions contribute particularly to club work at State, district, county and club levels in Tennessee.

Ratings of the seven nationally-recognized authorities and the ten

Tennessee State 4-H Committee members, then were analyzed separately so their reactions might be compared. The finally-accepted principles of successful 4-H Club work were selected based on the following three criteria: (1) that more than one-half of the panel members approved each item as a "principle" as defined; (2) that at least two-thirds of the panel members agreed with its wording, and (3) that panel members considered it at least "fairly important" by assigning it an average of 3.0 points or more on a zero to 4.0 scale.

The principles approved by national authorities were listed in consecutive order according to the priority each gained and tested for their supportive approval by State 4-H Committee members. The principles accepted by both panels were further made more precise with the aid of a graduate committee and finally accepted as principles of successful 4-H Club work.

II. FOUR-H CLUB PRINCIPLES ACCEPTED AND RECOMMENDED

Presented below in descending rank order of importance is the list of principles of successful 4-H Club work accepted by both nationally-recognized authorities and State 4-H Committee members. The principles are classified according to 4-H planning categories and are suggested for use as a general guide for agents interested in developing effective 4-H Club work in their county or area.

Participation Principles

1. Parents, volunteer leaders and 4-H members should be involved in program planning and implementation.

2. Four-H Club work should encourage the maximum involvement of youth in projects and activities to sustain their interest in 4-H work.

3. Four-H Club work should provide equal opportunities and dignity for all youth participating irrespective of race, creed or color.

Youth participate best in 4-H when grouped according to their stage of development.

5. Four-H Club work should include high quality participation of an optimum number of boys and girls in each county for each full-time professional staff equivalent.

6. Four-H Club work should seek to make for wholesome relations between adults and youth.

7. Reenrollment percent standards should be developed and used for total county 4-H enrollment.

Organization Principles

1. Four-H Club organization should be flexible enough to meet changing and varied needs and conditions.

2. Four-H Club work should include a wide range of activities for members to participate in at both local Club and county levels.

3. The 4-H program should be organized so as to provide valuable training and subject matter to the members.

4. County 4-H staffs should have the primary responsibility for getting plans prepared, executed and evaluated (e.g.: In Tennessee 100 percent of staff time is planned ahead in five-year planning and 60-80 percent in annual planning).

5. Four-H project offerings should incorporate sound educational

principles and consider recognized socioeconomic values and should appeal to the interests and needs of the members.

6. Four-H Club work should be organized democratically and with an applied science subject matter base.

7. Members should be so organized that they have a commonality of age and interest for mutual benefit (e.g.: Juniors - 10-14 years; Seniors - 14-21 years; -- or Explorers - 4th grade; Juniors - grades 5 and 6; Junior High - grades 7, 8 and 9; Seniors - grades 10, 11 and 12).

8. Four-H Club work should involve the cooperation of Extension workers, local people and club members.

9. Four-H Club work must give attention to the development of individuals through self-help programs.

10. Four-H Club programs should take account of the culture of the local people.

11. Four-H Club organization is enhanced by the involvement of local volunteer people in program development and by related publicity and public relations.

12. The local Club is the basic unit of organization of 4-H Club work.

13. Four-H Clubs should organize coeducational programs wherever possible.

14. Supervision of individual project work by agents and/or leaders through visits and other means is essential to successful project work.

15. The Extension agents should have an interest in working with youth and possess the ability to organize and plan 4-H work.

16. Four-H Club work should motivate youth to reenroll as long as additional benefits may be obtained.

17. Four-H Clubs should seek to enroll an optimum number of members in each club in order to provide optimum opportunities for all members to participate (e.g.: 20-40 members per club is a suggested standard in Tennessee).

18. Projects should be organized recognizing such accepted principles as "learning by doing," "serving while learning" and "earning while learning."

19. Certain basic county level 4-H organizations should be formed and maintained to advise or assist in developing 4-H programs (e.g.: County 4-H Club Council, 4-H Club Citizens' Committee, 4-H Club Leaders' Organization, 4-H Honor Club).

20. Four-H Club community activities or events and projects should be planned to foster community pride and build enthusiasm (e.g.: 4-H Demonstration Day, 4-H Achievement Day, Camps, fairs, rallies, campaigns).

Leadership Principles

1. The county Extension staff should assume and assert professional leadership.

2. Four-H agents should locate, train and use volunteer adult local leaders to the maximum extent possible in club work.

3. Training and retraining of volunteer local leaders in 4-H club work is essential if they are to perform successful leadership roles.

4. Leaders should consider the needs, interests and abilities of

boys and girls as they help plan and conduct 4-H Club work.

5. Junior leaders and Teen leaders should be selected and helped to develop so they may be able to perform expected leadership roles.

6. Initiation and consideration leader behaviors should be included in the selection and training of volunteer leaders.

7. Adult leaders should be willing to face new situations and help youth made wise decisions regarding problems encountered (e.g.: drugs, health and environmental problems).

8. Leaders should provide situations for developing leadership among the club members.

9. Volunteer leaders should perform their roles democratically.

10. Project leaders in 4-H Club work should be basically teachers of subject matter.

11. Adult project leaders should take the responsibility for guiding members in their chosen projects and related activities.

12. Junior leaders and Teen leaders should aid in the personal and citizenship development of younger 4-H'ers.

13. Volunteer leaders should help plan community and countywide projects through representation on a County 4-H Club Leaders' organization and/or other organizations (e.g.: a County Council of 4-H Clubs).

14. At least one organizational leader and one project leader should be enlisted to work with each club.

Recognition Principles

1. Awards should not be used as a substitute for teaching but as an incentive for learning.

2. Standards for recognition and awards should be challenging but within the reach of members.

3. Members should compete with members of similar abilities o make the awards program more meaningful and effective (i.e., this means competition by age group or grade level division as in Tennessee).

4. Recognition should be given to the largest possible number of members rather than providing only a few large awards.

5. Four-H Clubs should encourage healthy competition among individuals and groups through recognition programs.

6. Leaders, parents and sponsors should be recognized in addition to members.

7. Four-H should provide recognition to members for outstanding work in projects.

8. Incentives should be provided to encourage reenrollment.

9. Four-H Clubs should provide some sort of due recognition to stimulate and motivate worthy club members.

10. Special recognition should be provided for first year members and leaders.

11. Wide recognition (publicity) regarding the accomplishments of outstanding members, leaders and sponsors should be given through the mass media.

Sponsorship Principles

1. The sponsorship of 4-H Club work by businessmen should be encouraged but not overemphasized.

2. Local sponsorship of 4-H Club work promotes desirable relation-

ships between members, elders and organizations and should be encouraged.

3. Four-H Club work should enlist the support and cooperation of local groups and organizations for sponsorship (e.g.: Civic clubs, home demonstration clubs, farm and community organizations, cooperatives, churches).

4. The interest and support of parents, principals and teachers promote effective sponsorship of 4-H Club work.

5. Sponsors should be recognized and invited to participate in meaningful 4-H activities and ceremonies so as to encourage and further broaden their sponsorship involvement.

III. FOUR-H CLUB PRINCIPLES PARTIALLY APPROVED AND REJECTED

Those Approved by National but Rejected by State Panel

1. Participation of youth in 4-H projects encourages adults to accept new ideas. (Participation principle)

2. Four-H Club work is intended for and should include as a goal the enrollment of all American youth, ages 9-19. (Participation principle)

3. Minimum enrollment (participation) goals should be stated for each county 4-H audience (e.g.: Explorer, 4th grade, - 25%; Junior, grades 5 and 6, - 40%; Junior High, grades 7, 8 and 9, - 30%; Senior, grades 10, 11 and 12, - 10%). (Participation principle)

4. Four-H Club organization should include opportunities for other interested groups and members not in 4-H Clubs (i.e. includes special interest groups, project groups, 4-H Sniffy members and T. V. members). (Organization principle)

5. Four-H Club programs should be expanded to provide learning

experiences for the disadvantaged and handicapped where these do not exist. (Organization principle)

6. Adult leaders should be flexible in their approach to assigned leadership roles. (Leadership principle)

7. Organizational leaders should assume the responsibility for organizing 4-H Clubs. (Leadership principle)

8. Service-orientation should be used as a criterion in the selection and training of adult volunteer leaders. (Leadership principle)

9. Agents doing 4-H Club work should seek to enroll a standard number of adult leaders (i.e., organizational, project and activity) in each county for each full-time staff equivalent (e.g.: the standard in Tennessee is 100 adult leaders per F.S.E.). (Leadership principle)

10. The 4-H agents should be recognized for outstanding work in order to increase their zeal for 4-H work. (Recognition principle)

11. Four-H should seek to place more emphasis on intrinsic rewards than on extrinsic ones. (Recognition principle)

12. Four-H should provide an adequate kind and number of team and group awards to promote cooperation and team spirit. (Recognition principle)

13. The public should be made aware of and encouraged to sponsor appropriate 4-H Club projects and activities through local organizations. (Sponsorship principle)

14. The County 4-H Club Citizens' Committee or Council may appropriately sponsor or help sponsor 4-H Club activities. (Sponsorship principle)

Those Approved by State Panel but Rejected by National

1. Full participation in at least one 4-H Club project should be a requirement of 4-H Club membership. (Participation principle)

2. Counties should consider suggested state standards in developing participation goals for each 4-H audience (e.g.: including numbers of boys and girls; numbers of projects taken by boys and girls; number of projects completed; reenrollment percents). (Participation principle)

3. Local clubs may be organized centered around community, school, project, interest or other centers. (Organization principle)

4. Four-H Club workers should enlist the support and cooperation of local schools and school boards when organizing 4-H Clubs. (Organization principle)

5. Four-H Club projects selected by members should be carried to satisfactory completion (i.e., decision should be made at the local club or county level regarding what constitutes completion). (Organization principle)

6. Organization of 4-H Clubs through schools and other avenues should be designed to take account of both quantitative and qualitative advantages. (Organization principle)

7. Incentives and awards should be provided for the purpose of helping attain set 4-H Club educational goals. (Recognition principle)

Those Rejected by Both National and State Panels

1. Interesting local club meetings on a year-round basis should be organized to facilitate the active participation of members. (Organization principle)

2. Wide publicity should be given to 4-H Club sponsorship opportunities so as to encourage potential sponsors to volunteer. (Sponsorship principle)

IV. SUGGESTED USE OF 4-H CLUB PRINCIPLES

It is generally agreed that county agents might profit by considering certain principles accepted by 4-H authorities as being useful for developing effective 4-H Club work. Thus, the principles of successful 4-H Club work here identified are recommended for consideration by county agents responsible for 4-H Club and other Extension-related youth work. A word of caution might be in order at this point. Though the agreement of two panels has been secured, principles probably remain imperfectly stated and classified. Thus, considerable discretion should be used in applying principles to specific situations.

Findings may be adopted and profitably used: (1) in the training of professional and volunteer lay leaders; (2) in the analysis and appraisal of 4-H Club work by supervisory and specialist staffs, and (3) in planning youth club work in similar states or situations.

V. IDEAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

A few brief suggestions might be useful for those interested in additional studies in this area. Future research in Tennessee and other states as indicated below might seem appropriate.

1. States in which 4-H Club work is conducted primarily outside schools (e.g., community centered) could ask panels of judges to react to principles here identified in order to determine acceptance.

2. A similar study might be conducted with focus on "4-H" rather than "4-H Club work."

3. Studies could be conducted comparing the relative effectiveness of 4-H Club work under conditions where various principles are used to varying degrees.

4. Efforts should be made to test the relative value of the principles here identified as they are used as criteria by supervisors and specialists to evaluate Tennessee county 4-H Club programs.

5. A study should be conducted to sharpen or refine the principles, test them and further classify and order them to make them more useful.

6. Principles here identified could be introduced as independent variables in a regression analysis to determine any relations with agent performance and program accomplishment.

7. Related Tennessee Extension Management Information System (TEMIS) data should be used to determine the association between use of established principles and variables such as time allocation, contacts and use of various teaching methods--along with other measures of program accomplishment.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

NATIONAL PANEL MEMBERS

1. Dr. John W. Banning
   Program Leader, 4-H Youth
   Extension Service
   U. S. Department of Agriculture
   Washington, D. C.

2. Dr. Hope S. Daugherty
   Program Leader, 4-H Youth
   Extension Service
   U. S. Department of Agriculture
   Washington, D. C.

3. Dr. George S. Foster
   Professor and Leader, 4-H Club
   Agricultural Extension Service
   Knoxville, Tennessee

4. Mr. Caryle J. Gauger
   State Leader, 4-H Extension Youth Program
   Iowa State University
   Ames, Iowa

5. Dr. Rudy O. Monosmith
   Program Consultant
   National 4-H Club Foundation
   Washington, D. C.

6. Mr. W. Francis Pressly
   Program Consultant
   National 4-H Club Foundation
   Washington, D. C.

7. Dr. Lloyd L. Rutledge
   Program Leader, 4-H Youth
   Extension Service
   U. S. Department of Agriculture
   Washington, D. C.

APPENDIX B

STATE PANEL MEMBERS

Tennessee State 4-H Club Committee (Extension Agents) - 1971

1. Miss Shirley J. Benson
   Assistant Extension Agent
   Crossville, Tennessee

2. Miss Patricia F. Bowling
   Assistant Extension Agent
   Bristol, Tennessee

3. Mr. James T. Coleman
   Associate Extension Agent
   Memphis, Tennessee

4. Mrs. Marsha C. Flanigan
   Assistant Extension Agent
   Athens, Tennessee

5. Mr. Kenneth Johnson
   Extension Agent
   Dickson, Tennessee

6. Mr. Jim Lynn
   Associate Extension Agent
   Sparta, Tennessee

7. Mrs. Cheryl B. Matthews
   Assistant Extension Agent
   Union City, Tennessee

8. Miss Dorothy Sue Moore
   Assistant Extension Agent
   Gallatin, Tennessee

9. Mr. Clyde Taylor
   Extension Agent
   Knoxville, Tennessee

10. Mr. Jerry R. Walling
    Assistant Extension Agent
    Benton, Tennessee

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